

Dura language

Dura is a recently extinct language of Nepal. It has been classified in the West Bodish branch of Tibetan languages, though more recent work separates it out as an independent branch of Sino-Tibetan.^[4] Many of the Dura have switched to speaking Nepali, and the Dura language has sometimes been thought to be extinct. Some of the people who have switched to Nepali for their daily speech still use Dura for prayer.^[5]

The Himalayan Languages Project is working on recording additional knowledge of Dura.^[6] Around 1,500 words and 250 sentences in Dura have been recorded. The last known speaker of the language was the 82-year-old Soma Devi Dura.^[2]

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	Dura
Native to	Nepal
Ethnicity	2,160 (2011 census) ^[1]
Extinct	between 2008 ^[2] and 2012 ^[1] with the death of Soma Devi Dura
Language family	Sino-Tibetan <ul style="list-style-type: none">Greater Magaric<ul style="list-style-type: none">Dura
Language codes	
ISO 639-3	drq
Glottolog	dura1244 (http://glottolog.org/resource/language/id/dura1244) ^[3]

Classification

Schorer (2016:293)^[7] classifies Dura as part of his newly proposed Greater Magaric branch.

Distribution

The ethnic Dura people mostly live in Lamjung District, with some in neighboring Tanahu District of Gandaki Pradesh in central Nepal.^[8] They mostly live on farms in the hilly countryside.^[8] Different recent census counts have reported the number of Dura people anywhere from 3,397 to 5,676.^[8]

Dura villages include:^[7]

- बाँग्रे Bāṅgre
- बेसी बाँग्रे Besī Bāṅgre

- बेसी फाँट Besī Phāṭ
- सिन्दुरे Sindure
- धुसेनी Dhusenī
- नस्के Naske (Dura majority)
- नेटा Neṭā
- चन्दि गाउँ Candigāũ
- भाँगु Bhāṅgu
- मालिङ Mālīṅ
- आरीकोसे Ārikose
- ठूलो स्वाँरा Ṭhūlo Svāṅrā (Dura majority)
- खजे गाउँ Khaje Gāũ
- तुर्लुङ Turluṅ (Dura majority)
- तान्द्राङ्कोट Tāndrāṅkoṭ
- Kunchha
- Bhorletar

Other ethnic groups in the Dura region include the Gurung, Brahmins, Chetrīs, Kāmī, and Damāi.^[7]

Tandrange

A closely related language variety called *Tandrange* (Nepali: Tāndrāṅ; IPA: tandraŋ) is spoken in a few Gurung villages.^[7] Tandrange is spoken in the villages of *Tāndrāṅ* तान्द्राङ, Pokharī Thok पोखरी थोक, and Jitā जीता. However, Tandrange speakers adamantly consider themselves as not related to the stigmatized Dura people.^[7]

Reconstruction

Schorer (2016:286-287) reconstructs the following Proto-Dura words.

- *hāyu ‘blood’
- *c^hiũṅ ‘cold’
- *kim ‘house’
- *ti ‘water’
- *krut ‘hand’
- *kyu ‘stomach’
- *yāku ‘night’
- *mamī ‘sun’
- *lām- ‘path’
- *luṅ ‘stone’
- *daṅ- ‘to see’
- *rā- ‘to come’
- *khāC- ‘to go’
- *y^hā ‘to give’

- *c^hi- 'to say'

Vocabulary

Schorer (2016:126-127) provides the following 125-word Swadesh list of Dura.

No.	Gloss	Dura
1.	I (1SG)	ŋi ~ ŋe
2.	you (2SG)	no
3.	we (inclusive)	ŋyāro
4.	this	ī
5.	that	huī
6.	Who?	su
7.	What?	hāde
8.	not	ma-, ta- (prohibitive)
9.	all (of a number)	dhāī
10.	many	bhāī
11.	one	kyau, nām, di-
12.	two	j ^h im, ŋe-
13.	big	kāt ^h e
14.	long	kānu, remo ~ hreŋo
15.	small	āc ^h irī
16.	woman (adult)	misā
17.	man (adult)	kalārā, bro
18.	person	bro
19.	fish (n)	ḍisyā, nāh ~ nāhō ~ nāhū ~ nāi
20.	bird; chicken	o
21.	dog	nākyu ~ nakyu ~ nakī, koka
22.	louse	syā
23.	tree	kepo ~ kemo
24.	seed (n)	ṭisro, hulu
25.	leaf	lyoī, lho
26.	root	-
27.	bark (of tree)	-
28.	skin	ke
29.	flesh	syo
30.	blood	hāyu
31.	bone	-
32.	grease, fat	ducc ^h u
33.	egg	odī, onī
34.	horn (of bull etc.)	soglo, sono
35.	tail	-
36.	feather	phya
37.	hair (human)	kra

38.	head	pad ^h e
39.	ear	naya, muni, rānu
40.	eye	mi
41.	nose	nu
42.	mouth	māsi, sũ
43.	tooth	sa ~ se
44.	tongue	li
45.	nail	se
46.	foot	sepe
47.	knee	-
48.	hand	kuru
49.	belly	kyu
50.	neck	k ^h alī, po ~ pō
51.	breasts	nāmlo
52.	heart	māu
53.	liver	ciŋ
54.	to drink	kiu-
55.	to eat	co-
56.	to bite	-
57.	to see	do- ~ dō-, mātā-
58.	to hear	tās-, tāu-, tānu-
59.	to know	syo-
60.	to sleep	tānu-
61.	to die	si-
62.	to kill	sā-, kāne-, kāde
63.	to swim	-
64.	to fly	ŋyau, hāsu-
65.	to walk	so-
66.	to come	hro
67.	to lie	-
68.	to sit	huni-
69.	to stand	dec ^h e-
70.	to give	hyo-
71.	to say	c ^h i-
72.	sun	mamī
73.	moon	tālā
74.	star	-so (in compound)
75.	water	ti ~ ʈi

76.	rain (n)	ti ~ ʈi
77.	stone	thũ ~ tũ, kãno ~ kãnu
78.	sand	-
79.	earth, soil	kãc ^h o, c ^h uu
80.	cloud	-
81.	smoke (n)	ma-k ^h u
82.	fire	mĩ
83.	ash(es)	ma-p ^h u
84.	to burn (vi)	bani-
85.	path	lãut ^h yo
86.	mountain	lgẽwarap ^h a [sic]
87.	red	c ^h ãblĩ
88.	green	-
89.	yellow	kẽlo
90.	white	bint ^h ã
91.	black	keplo
92.	night	yãku
93.	hot	-
94.	cold	c ^h iũ
95.	full	ʈ ^h yãmmay
96.	new	kãc ^h ã
97.	good	c ^h yãu- (v), c ^h ãblĩ (also 'red')
98.	round	burluŋ
99.	dry	-
100.	name	rãmĩ
101.	he (3SG)	hui
102.	he ₂ (3SG)	ŋo ~ no
103.	you (2PL)	nãro(-nĩ)
104.	they (3PL)	hyãro
105.	three	sãm
106.	four	pim
107.	five	kum (<'hand')
108.	where?	kālã
109.	when?	komo
110.	how?	kudinĩ
111.	other	agyu, rijã

112.	few	ācitī
113.	fruit	pokimuni
114.	flower	ŋep ^h u ~ nep ^h u
115.	grass	c ^h ĩ
116.	snake	kāuĩ
117.	worm	k ^h ātalĩ
118.	rope	rasarĩ
119.	river	kloi ~ klou
120.	to warm (vt)	tāle-u
121.	old	te
122.	straight (not curved)	hopay
123.	sharp	mhyā- (v)
124.	wet	t ^h o- (v)
125.	happy	kru- (v)

Numerals

Dura numerals are (Schorer 2016:146-147):

- 0. liŋa
- 1. nām, kyau, di-
- 2. j^him
- 3. sām
- 4. pim
- 5. kum
- 6. cyām (Indo-Aryan loanword)
- 7. syām (Indo-Aryan loanword)
- 8. him
- 9. tum
- 10. t^him
- 20. j^him-t^hĩ
- 30. sām-t^hĩ
- 100. t^hinŋanā, kāt^herāgo
- 1,000. jena

See also

- [Dura word list](#) (Wiktionary)

References

1. [Dura](https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/drq/) (<https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/drq/>) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)

2. "The last of Nepal's Dura speakers" (http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7189898.stm). *BBC News*. January 15, 2008.
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5. Van Driem, George. *Languages of the Himalayas: An Ethnolinguistic Handbook of the Greater Himalayan Region*, Brill Academic Publishers 2002 (ISBN 978-9004103900)
6. Programme Description | Himalayan Languages Project (<http://www.ias.nl/himalaya/?q=description>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20070729025723/http://www.ias.nl/himalaya/?q=description>) 2007-07-29 at the [Wayback Machine](#)
7. Schorer, Nicolas. 2016. *The Dura Language: Grammar and Phylogeny*. Leiden: Brill.
8. Nepal Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) - Dura (<http://www.nefin.org.np/content/view/36/42>) Archived (<https://web.archive.org/web/20070928013406/http://www.nefin.org.np/content/view/36/42>) 2007-09-28 at the [Wayback Machine](#)

External links

- [The last of Nepal's Dura speakers \(http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7189898.stm\)](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7189898.stm) BBC news story
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